

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM BROWN (S/PRS)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, SOPN (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF 18 FEBRUARY DAILY NEWS BRIEFING

NO. 17

1. PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO SAKHAROV DOMINATED BRIEFING.
THERE WERE LESSER QUESTIONS ON RHODESIA NEGOTIATIONS (DUFF
VISIT BEGINNING 21 FEBRUARY), LEBANON (DETAILS OF OUR NEW
AID PACKAGE) AND ROMANIAN DISSENT. HUSSEIN POST STORY
WAS NO COMMENTED.

2. IN REPLY TO QUESTION ON TASS ANNOUNCEMENT, ACTING SPOKES-
MAN BROWN CONFIRMED THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN CALLED
ON ACTING SECRETARY HARTMAN FEBRUARY 17 TO DELIVER ORAL
STATEMENT WHICH REFLECTED SOVIET DISPLEASURE AT OUR EX-
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PRESSIONS OF CONCERN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION.
COMMENTING, BROWN SAID WE DO NOT CONSIDER OUR STATEMENTS
TO BE INTERFERENCE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS. OUR VIEW
IS THAT HUMAN RIGHTS IS AN ISSUE WHICH GOES BEYOND NATIONAL
BORDERS. THIS CONCEPT IS EMBODIED IN A NUMBER OF INTER-
NATIONAL DOCUMENTS SUCH AS THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ON

SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE. OUR POSITION IS
CONSISTENT, AND IN FACT SUPPORTIVE OF, THE INTERNATIONALLY

ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES EXPRESSED IN THOSE DOCUMENTS.

3. BROWN DECLINED TO CHARACTERIZE DOBRYNIN-HARTMAN
MEETING FURTHER. WHEN ASKED IF IT WAS PROTEST, AS TASS HAD
CLAIMED, BROWN REITERATED THAT PRESENTATION WAS ORAL
STATEMENT OF SOVIET VIEWS. BROWN SAID PRESIDENT'S LETTER
TO SAKHAROV WAS NOT MENTIONED. ASKED IF SAKHAROV EXCHANGE
HAS HAD ANY DAMAGING EFFECT ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS,
BROWN REPLIED THAT WE BELIEVE OTHER ELEMENTS OF OUR RELA-
TIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION SHOULD GO FORWARD ON
THEIR OWN MERITS, AND REFERRED TO PRESIDENT'S AND
SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS IN THIS REGARD.

4. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE QUESTIONING ON REPORTED "DIS-
SENT" AND CRITICISM WITHIN DEPT OF PRESIDENT HAVING REPLIED
DIRECTLY TO SAKHAROV. SKEPTICAL NOTE AMONG QUESTIONERS WAS
OCCASIONED BY NBC MORNING TV NEWS PIECE CARRYING QUOTES
ATTRIBUTED TO UNNAMED DEPT OFFICIALS CRITICAL OF PRESI-
DENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS TACTICS. BROWN SAID THAT DEPT HAD BEEN
INVOLVED IN PROCESS OF HANDLING SAKHAROV QUESTION FROM
OUTSET; THAT DEPT CONTRIBUTED FUNDAMENTALLY TO THINKING
ON IT; THAT PRESIDENT'S REPLY WAS REAFFIRMATION OF PRESI-
DENT'S DEEP CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND OF ADMINISTRA-
TION'S DETERMINATION TO MAKE OUR CONCERN KNOWN PUBLICLY.
THIS REASONING USED REPEATEDLY AND INCLUDED OBSERVATION,
IN REPLY TO BLUNT QUESTION, "I MADE VERY CLEAR THIS
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BUILDING'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. I WANT
TO PUT DOWN ANY KIND OF NOTION THAT SOMEHOW THERE IS A
WAVE OF DISSENT ON THIS MATTER. THAT IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE."

HARTMAN

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Sent Date: 19-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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